

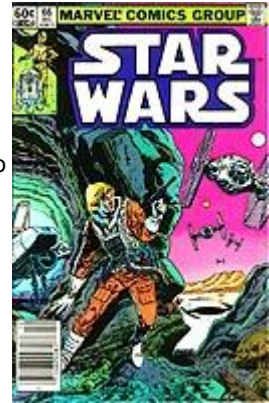
Beheboth: Blood and Water

Planet Hoppers: June 2004

By [Cory Herndon](#)

Welcome to "Planet Hoppers," where each month, we bring you a set of articles on a particular world in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* galaxy that a Gamemaster can use separately or as a linked series of events.

This month's feature finds Luke Skywalker once again on Beheboth, a water-starved world on the Outer Rim that's home to the strange energy beings called Tirrith. Be sure to check back each week for a new installment.



Part 1: Return to Prosperity

In which Luke Skywalker answers an urgent call for help from an old friend.

Part 2: Who Slew Berl Matoone?

In which moisture farmer and elected peacekeeper Darial Anglethorn investigates a bizarre killing.

Part 3: The Tirrith Trap

In which a disgraced former Imperial hatches a plan to seize power on the Outer Rim, starting with Beheboth.

Part 4: Hit and Mist

In which peacekeeper Anglethorn regains consciousness and Luke learns the fate of an old enemy.

About the Author

One-time *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* editor Cory J. Herndon is now a freelancer. Cory's work has appeared in *Amazing Stories*, *Duelist*, *TopDeck*, *Star Wars Gamer*, *Dragon*, and *SCIFI.com*. He has done additional design work on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook (primarily the Droids chapter), *The Dark Side Sourcebook* (creatures and archetypes), and the *Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game*. He is also the author of Volumes 5 and 6 of the **Magic: The Gathering Encyclopedia**. Cory's short story "Like Spider's Silk" appears in the *Secrets of Magic* Anthology. He asks that you please purchase a copy of it and the **D&D** novel *The Living Dead* for every room in your home. Cory is currently authoring original content for Xbox.com, writing the third book in an upcoming *Magic: The Gathering* novel trilogy, and continuing to design *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* material for the Wizards website.

Part 1: Return to Prosperity

By Cory Herndon

Beheboth has never paid the galaxy much heed, and the galaxy, for the most part, has returned the favor. The dry, rocky world at the end of an old offshoot of the Hydian Way between Arbra and Golrath wasn't even worth the trouble of stationing a garrison for the Empire, though technically it was a member of the Old Republic and annexed by Imperial order. Beheboth had little voice in the Republic or Imperial Senates except distant Coruscant-based regional representatives who never set foot on the planet. The Human settlers that gradually replaced most of the original Bothan colonists survive by farming moisture from the atmosphere, subsistence-level agriculture centered around a few salty natural springs, and a great deal of smuggling, gunrunning, and various illicit trades. Many Behebothan natives display cosmetic divergences from the norm such as purple skin, extra eyebrows, or missing fingers, but otherwise are the same as baseline Humans. Anthropologists theorize that the planet's salt and alkaline duststorms, combined with a relatively small gene pool (Beheboth's Human population has yet to exceed 60,000 to 80,000), has accelerated minor mutations.

Four years after the fall of local warlord Gideon Longspar, Beheboth sent a representative to the New Republic Senate for the first time: Darial Anglethorn, a moisture farmer who had made peace with the natives and helped kick-start a slow return to life on Beheboth's barren surface. Anglethorn usually attends only one or two major sessions per year, since she works her own farm and serves as elected peacekeeper of Prosperity (formerly Garrotine), the largest town on the planet and its only major starport. By a series of coincidences, she did not come face to face with her friend Luke Skywalker until the Jedi answered her request for assistance in a sticky murder case.

The only native sentient species on Beheboth are the Tirrith, which remain mysterious to the few researchers who have bothered to study them. Scientists still aren't certain whether the energy-based, gaseous Tirrith represent a single huge colonial organism comprised of almost 17 million individuals, or several thousand colonies of anywhere from a few dozen to hundreds each. When Luke Skywalker was stranded on the planet in the wake of the skirmish at Golrath, he helped Anglethorn release the Tirrith from Longspar's enslavement. The grateful Tirrith electrically seeded Beheboth's atmosphere and brought rain to the salt flats for the first time in centuries.

Luke Skywalker and R2-D2 traveled by X-wing to Beheboth a few months after Han Solo and Leia Organa were married. The Jedi Knight, deep in research for what would eventually become the new Jedi Academy, received an urgent message relayed from Coruscant. Over the next 24 hours, Luke set a few speed records his new brother-in-law would have been hard pressed to match.

Planet: Beheboth
Planet Type: Terrestrial
Climate: Dry
Terrain: Deserts, mountains, outpost towns, shallow salt lakes
Atmosphere: Breathable
Gravity: Standard
Diameter: 11,496 km
Length of Day: 28 standard hours
Length of Year: 411 local days
Sentient Species: Tirrith, Humans, other
Language: Basic
Population: 17 million
Species Mix: Tirrith 99%, Humans 0.9%, assorted alien species 0.1%
Government: Loose network of democratic town councils
Major Exports: None
Major Imports: Foodstuffs, technology, water
System/Star: Beheboth
Region: Outer Rim

Planets	Type	Moons
Huip	Sungrazer planetoid	--
Brenu	Sungrazer planetoid	--
Hebeth	Molten rock	--
Hebine Ring	Asteroid belt	--
Beheboth	Terrestrial	3
Behenui	Gas giant	9
Derenath	Ice ball	--
Omdrid	Ice ball	--

Luke Skywalker's Personal Journal

Beheboth, Day 1, [Date redacted by New Republic Intelligence]

I've had some bad landings, but this beat all of them except my first trip to Dagobah and that time Leia and I were buried under lava. My T-65's parked at the end of a furrow out in the middle of the salt flats. The old girl's missing one wing, two lasers, a torpedo tube and most of engines three and four, all courtesy of the pirates I encountered on the edge of the system. I've been spending too much time in the Core. I wasn't prepared for them. Only Artoo and the Force warned me in time to avoid the first volley. Once alerted, I was able to take out the uglies with little trouble, but a chunk of TIE solar panel sliced my starboard wing assembly clean off. I would have avoided the collision, but just at that moment I felt over a hundred Tirrith die screaming.

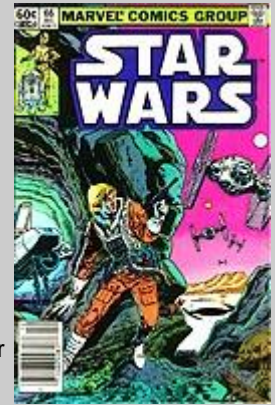
I've lifted the ship up onto its landing gear -- thank the Force *that* wasn't disabled -- and left Artoo to do what he could to fix it. I regret leaving him alone, but he's got three functioning starship weapons for protection, and as soon as he's done all he can, he'll contact me. Until I find out what killed those Tirrith, Artoo will be safer getting the X-wing spaceworthy again. We still haven't been able to raise the New Republic outpost, which has me even more concerned, but Darial's town is my first stop. I can feel that's where the Tirrith died. Strange that I haven't seen any sign of them since I got here. Not even in the high atmosphere.

The planet has definitely changed in a short amount of time, at least the area around Prosperity. The rains that the Tirrith brought five years ago have allowed a return of plant life, but it looks confined to the mountains. The strangely colored flatland terrain is still more a desert than a forest. Most of the vegetation is of the hardscrabble brush variety, but there are many signs of increase in small animal life: birds, reptilians, and a multitude of insects that sing anxiously through the Force at the lumbering invader from offworld.

Night fell by the time I reached the amber and blue lights of Prosperity, a former one-bantha town that looked like it was up to at least bantha number three. There are a few more residential buildings of the type used by people who spend most of their money in the *other* kind of structure that multiplied in the last five years: cantinas. On my last visit, there'd been one small tavern. Now, there were at least a dozen loud signs promoting food, drink, and diversions. I didn't see a soul on the central avenue or in the surrounding windows, but I could feel dozens of frightened people all around, still uncertain what was going on. I saw all this peripherally. My main focus was on

The Water Bandits

"The Water Bandits" marked the end of the Walt Simonson era in the Marvel Comics *Star Wars* series, and the last time writer David Micheline, penciller/co-plotter/occasional inker Simonson, and inker/occasional penciller Tom Palmer would put their collective stamp on the original Expanded Universe (after *The Empire Strikes Back* but before *Return of the Jedi*). The one-shot story featured a classic "hero turns into *Shane* after crashing on a frontier planet" plot starring a young not-quite-Jedi still reeling over Shira Brie's death and betrayal. Stranded after the raid on Golrath, Luke is Artoo-less and unable to contact the fleet, so he ends up hoofing around a planet not unlike his own homeworld of Tatooine. Naturally, he soon befriends a strong, beautiful, redheaded moisture farmer who offers him a taste of a life that might have been, joins her to fight a local warlord, makes contact with a non-corporeal species, and leaves the redhead behind.



Check out a little slice of history in Marvel *Star Wars* #66, or Volume 4 of the Dark Horse compilation *A Long Time Ago . . .* at a fine comics retailer near you.

the scene in the street, which I knew was the center of the terrifying mental blast I'd endured on the way into the system.

The bomb's radius hadn't been large, but the energy released in the small area must have been highly concentrated -- some kind of microtherm device, maybe. A starburst of pinkish glass fragments glittered in the light of Beheboth's three moons, dusting larger hunks of melted metal debris laced with wires and circuitry, along with larger pieces that looked like the remnants of a small repulsor-powered cargo hauler. There were also Human remains, though I'm sorry to say I couldn't tell from what was left how many people had died in the explosion. One thing was certain, though. The Force told me that this was where a hive of over a hundred Tirrith had been incinerated.

Another feeling hit me as I pushed the Tirrith's residual agony into a safe corner of my mind: Darial was nearby, alive but hurt. And somehow, she was reaching through the Force for help from someone, anyone. The connection was odd, no control or focus to it, just a wave of thought that said, *I'm dying*.

I finally found her almost twenty meters down the street, where the shockwave must have thrown her. Darial was sitting slumped against a wall, clutching her bleeding abdomen and a head wound that I hoped was as superficial as it looked. One of her legs looked broken, and the other had been pierced by shrapnel.

She was awake when I approached, and she tried to call out. I told her to wait so I could concentrate. I may have a lousy bedside manner, but I've learned some new -- well, old -- Jedi healing techniques from the *Chu'unthor* records. After a couple of minutes, I was able to stabilize her injuries and ease the pain long enough to carry her safely to the only doctor in town. Dr. Jerimott says she'll live, but he won't let me talk to her until at least tomorrow morning, though it could be as long as a day or two. I can still sense her more strongly than I should be able to. I think she may be Force-sensitive, and I was too inexperienced and distracted to notice the first time I met her. I have an odd feeling about this.

Artoo says there's still no word from the outpost, but there's more healing to be done, some of which I can do while meditating. First thing in the morning, I'm getting to the bottom of this, whether Darial's awake or not.

Part 2: Who Slew Berl Matoone?

By Cory Herndon

The first homicide case for newly elected Prosperity peacekeeper Darial Anglethorn was a grisly one. She personally found the bloated, poisoned corpse of Berl Matoone while inspecting vaporators on her own farm, and the sight was not one she would soon forget. Anglethorn launched an investigation immediately, but disappeared soon after and hasn't been seen for days, even by search parties.

That much Luke Skywalker learned from one of the few licensed doctors on Beheboth, Hower Jerimott. Only the still-unconscious peacekeeper could say for sure what had happened next, because the townsfolk weren't talking, even under Force influence.

Luke had to wait almost 48 hours for his friend to regain consciousness after she suffered injuries in a bombing that seemed to have no witnesses -- and also may have killed a giant hive of Tirrith. The Jedi made use of the time to begin his own investigation, perusing whatever documents the town doctor could provide.

Autopsy Report

Submitted to Prosperity Town Council by Dr. Hower Jerimott, Acting Coroner

Name of Deceased: Berl Matoone

Cause of Death: Massive cardiac failure due to catastrophic toxin levels

Peacekeeper Anglethorn found the body of Berl Matoone on her vaporator fields 2.3 kilometers north-northeast of Prosperity, just after dawn on the day before harvest. Though Matoone hasn't made himself many friends around these parts since his farm went bankrupt and he started hitting the bottle hard, I cannot say with certainty who would want to go so far as to kill the old dewgatherer, let alone who would have been able to do it like this. I certainly don't suspect Darial. In fact, I'm afraid I have only one plausible suspect, but I can't bring myself to commit such speculation to this report without some proof.

Matoone's blood has turned completely, and uniformly, toxic. His red and white blood cells have changed at the molecular level into a deadly poison -- in short, he was ultimately killed by his own circulatory system. What I cannot explain is how this change took place. I can detect no disease, genetic condition, or external substance that could have such an effect, and I have found no marks indicating injection.

I am left to conclude that Matoone's death was not an accident, yet I am at a loss to explain the condition of the body. Until this mystery is solved, travel in the flats should be restricted to emergencies only, and townsfolk should be advised to remain inside after dark.

Peacekeeper's Initial Investigation Report

Submitted by Peacekeeper Darial Anglethorn

Berl Matoone used to work for me. I had to let him go when his drinking got out of control, but he'd never blamed me. Berl didn't have any real enemies in all of Prosperity to my knowledge, though I plan to check in with a few of the seamier cantinas first. There's a good chance he just owed someone too much money, I'm afraid.

The only problem is, what kind of loan shark could kill someone like that? That's my dilemma: only one being, or beings, on Beheboth could have caused this: Tirrith. But even when Gideon Longspar was using them to rob the moisture farms blind, Tirrith never killed anyone. I didn't even think they could. But how else can I explain the way Matoone was poisoned from the inside out?

For some reason, Tirrith have not communicated with us for a few years, leaving us with an ongoing drought that threatens to wipe out what little life has taken root in the mountains. Even so, this is completely out of character, to say the least. If someone has been manipulating Tirrith again and somehow turned them lethal, I'm going to need help. I'm heading out to the New Republic's base in Longspar's old fortress to ask for assistance, but first I'm going to send a message to Luke Skywalker on Doc Jerimott's HoloNet node. I have a hunch Luke might be the only one who can help.

Gamemaster Notes: Darial Anglethorn

Darial Anglethorn is a mildly Force-sensitive Human from the planet Beheboth. Her keen instincts and iron determination have helped her carve a life as a successful moisture farmer from the planet's forbidding salt flats. She long ago earned the respect of the entire planet when she and Luke Skywalker rid the planet of Gideon Longspar's water bandits. Today, Darial serves as the elected peacekeeper of Prosperity, but she still maintains her moisture farm.

Darial is unaware that she is Force-sensitive, but she has learned to follow her hunches. She carries one Force skill, Empathy, which she chalks up to simple intuition -- when it works.

Darial Anglethorn: Human Female Fringer 6/Noble 4/Scout 2; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 20 (+6 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 54/10; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4 +1, knife) or 9/+4 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster pistol); SQ Barter, bonus class skill: 1st-level fringer (Repair), bonus class skill: 4th-level fringer (Diplomacy), bonus class skill: 1st-level noble (Intimidate), coordinate +1, favor +2, inspire confidence, jury-rig +4, peacekeeper, resource access, survival +2, trailblazing; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +10; SZ M; FP 8; DSP 0; Rep +3; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 18; Challenge Code F.

Equipment: Comlink, heavy blaster pistol, knife, peacekeeper's badge, scarf, work clothing.

Skills: Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (Beheboth) +16, Knowledge (business) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Listen +9, Pilot +7, Profession (moisture farmer) +17, Profession (peacekeeper) +7, Read/Write Basic, Repair +18, Search +12, Sense Motive +8, Spot +11, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Ithorese, Speak Ryl, Survival +17.

Force Skills: Empathy +4.

Feats: Force-Sensitive, Gearhead, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Skill Emphasis (Profession [moisture farmer]), Track, Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Special Qualities: Peacekeeper -- As the elected peacekeeper of Prosperity, Darial Anglethorn receives a +4 bonus to Reputation checks on Beheboth and carries a badge that gives her the right to make arrests, organize posses, detain suspects, and perform other law enforcement activities according to the bylaws of the town charter. In game terms, the badge provides a +2 bonus to Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Gather Information checks, along with a +1 bonus to Darial's coordinate ability. Darial must display the badge to gain the law-enforcement bonuses, but she doesn't need to display it to gain the Reputation bonus.



Part 3: The Tirrith Trap

By Cory Herndon

After the Teezl incident, Mils Giel (whom Darth Vader personally demoted from Admiral to Lieutenant for losing the priceless creature to saboteurs) found himself in charge of a survey team performing a thorough inspection on the former Rebel base world Golrath. After he discovered that the unusual bedrock on Golrath had photoreceptive properties that could potentially reveal critical Rebel secrets, he notified Lord Vader of the find -- but his small survey team came under attack by a Rebel strike force that had just learned the same thing. When he saw that Leia Organa was the agent deployed to set the base's self-destruct systems, Giel set the timer himself and sealed Leia inside. The quick-thinking Princess turned the tables and escaped, leaving Giel to return to Lord Vader with neither the glory of a hero's death nor the location of the latest Rebel base. It was Giel that damaged Luke Skywalker's X-wing on Golrath with a stray, spiteful blaster shot, forcing him to set down on Beheboth five years earlier.

Giel was spared Vader's wrath when his own vessel's engines succumbed to damage it took during Golrath base's destruction. Like Skywalker, a failed hyperdrive forced him to the nearest inhabited planet: Beheboth. Giel's starship, and most of his remaining crew, did not survive the crash. The former Admiral and his faithful right-hand man Malka ejected in the only escape pod just in time to survive.

Sergeant Malka, as it happened, was an aspiring holonovelist. He believed that once Giel became a warlord of the Outer Rim, his own diaries would become best sellers. With R2-D2's help, Skywalker recovered this entry from a broken datapad in the wreckage of the explosion that seriously injured Darial Anglethorn.

Malka's Log: 1,825 Days since Planetfall

After five long years, we finally may be approaching the end. The Quarren is dead, his usefulness served after years of breeding and condensing these native creatures, testing them to their very limits, and turning them into something that can kill with a thought. I still do not know how the Admiral contacted him or where he came from, but his ship should still be at the starport. We're going to get off this bloody rock, and soon.

The Tirrith restraint globes function perfectly. The Rebel outpost had no defenses, and they made excellent test subjects.

Unfortunately, the Rebels were supplied only by infrequent troop transport visits and had no vessel we could steal, which means the Quarren's ship is the only one we can be sure is there. Therefore, we must first wipe out this pathetic town of farmers and alien vermin, and then return to Imperial favor with the most powerful tool of assassination in the galaxy. Why, if we could continue to breed them, super-hives could replace troops on the battlefield, annihilating the Rebels before they even leave their hidden bases.



Ordinary Tirrith break up a card game.

The Admiral now stalks a slow circle around the Tirrith cage containing the part of the hive organism that had killed that idiot moisture farmer (an idiot, but his information on Longspar had proved valuable) and now, these Rebel scum. The other, more highly concentrated tank is still hooked up to a fully-charged kill system.

Each device is about the size of an astromech droid. The Admiral's made-to-order Tirrith restraining globes were modeled on those used by a brigand chieftain during the civil war. They consist of a vaporator casing and filtration system that serves as a base, hovering on repulsors scavenged from a security droid. A translucent pinkish ball of transparisteel, hermetically sealed, contains the captive Tirrith. Each globe's base contains vents that can release volatile gas into the chamber or be opened to release the Tirrith. A simple electric prod powered by a small Vuvritech 44 generator bolted onto the side ensures that our guests listen when we speak, and keeps them agitated. The gas reacts violently (and explosively) with the Tirrith's small physical presence, ensuring that it doesn't turn on us.

Soon, with these strange creatures at our command, our boots shall walk a Star Destroyer's bridge once more. I'm lucky to have a commander like Mils Giel.

Gamemaster Notes: Mils Giel

Giel managed to make contact with his own trusted sources a few weeks after arriving on Beheboth. His cousins, wealthy nobles on the planet Ralltiir, connected him with a Quarren scientist who specialized in genetic modification. His great-uncle, a retired officer who'd served at the dawn of the New Order, provided the former admiral and his aide with credits as they kept a low profile in Prosperity, staying out of Vader's sight, though it galled Giel to do so.

Giel used much of the money to buy a small moisture farm in the wastes far outside of town, and he made sure it was well protected. Most Behebothans believe that Giel and Malka are more paranoid than most moisture farmers, do most of their trade with more distant towns on the far side of the wastes, and are a little peculiar, but not particularly strange. After all, they buy a lot of vaporator parts. But secretly, Giel and Malka have been busy turning the planet Beheboth's only true natives into a biological weapon. Giel believes the killer Tirrith and their potential as a weapon will make him a feared man in the Empire, powerful enough to regain his rank and crush the Rebels that have heretofore made his career such a disappointment.

Mils Giel: Human Male Soldier 6/Noble 1/Officer 4/Fringer 2;Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Defense 18 (+8 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 105/18; Atk +10/+5 melee (2d4, vibrodagger) or +10/+5 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster pistol) or +10/+5 ranged (4d6 +1, 6 frag grenades); SQ Bonus class skill: Noble 1 (Intimidate), bonus class skill: Fringer 1 (Intimidate), favor +1, frightful presence, leadership, requisition supplies; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +9; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 18; Rep +3; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14; Challenge Code F.

Equipment: Comlink, credit chip (33,519 credits remaining), frag grenades (6), heavy blaster pistol, mechanic's overalls, mutant Tirrith restraint cages with mutant Tirrith, vibrodagger.

Skills: Astrogate +5, Bluff +4, Computer Use +11, Demolitions +4, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Knowledge (Beheboth) +5, Knowledge (politics) +5, Knowledge (tactics) +7, Knowledge (Tirrith) +10, Listen +7, Pilot +5, Profession (Naval Officer) +17, Read/Write Basic, Repair +2, Sense Motive +7, Speak Basic, Speak Hutttese, Speak Quarrenese, Speak Sullustan, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Low Profile, Persuasive, Point Blank Shot, Skill Emphasis (Intimidate), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Tirrith]), Starship Operation (capital ships), Starship Operation (space transports), Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).



Part 4: Hit and Mist

By Cory Herndon

With Luke's X-wing as fixed as it was going to get without more parts, R2-D2 met Luke Skywalker at the New Republic's Outpost B-2 during the long period Darial Anglethorn remained unconscious and healing. The pair found the bodies of over a dozen scientists and soldiers strewn haphazardly about what had once been Gideon Longspar's stronghold, killed in the same manner as Berl Matoone. The droid's instruments and the Jedi's senses told them that the outpost's staff had been poisoned at their stations and died before they could raise an alarm or signal. There was also evidence that someone had deactivated the communications systems permanently -- with an explosive -- before leaving.

Luke Skywalker's Personal Journal

Beheboth, Day 3, [Date redacted by New Republic Intelligence]

It took the better part of a day, but the men and women of Outpost B-2 have been given proper burials, at least as good as I could manage with an Artoo unit and the tools available. We got back to Doc Jerimott's med unit -- such as it was -- by nightfall and returned the speeder, and by the time I made it into her room, Darial was sitting up, drinking a glass of water. She smiled as I came in, and I felt buoyed by her swift recovery despite the day's grim work. I asked Artoo to record her story, and I've included his transcript here. General Cracken needs to hear about this as soon as possible.

Darial Anglethorn: By now, you must have found the outpost. I'm sorry, Luke. I didn't get there in time.

Luke Skywalker: From the look of things, you just would have been killed, too. When did you find them?

DA: Just before you got here, from what Doc told me. Luke, it's the Tirrith.

LS: I . . . it's hard to explain, but I know. I felt them die. And I found something in the wreckage that explained the poisonings. Some kind of diary an ex-Imperial named Malka was keeping --

DA: The little guy? He was keeping a diary? Am I in it?

LS: Not the part I found.

DA: Good.

LS: Anyway, it sounded like they had only taken a single hive. Where are the rest? I haven't even seen Tirrith since I got here. What happened?

DA: It's complicated. I found a connection between Matoone and a couple of offworlders -- Giel and the other one, Maklak or whatever -- who had set up a moisture farm out in the wastes a few years back. No one had paid them much mind, and they didn't seem to have many visitors except some alien called a Quarren --

LS: Quarren?

DA: Yeah, a Quarren. By the time I got to their farm, they were gone. And it wasn't a farm. They had some kind of lab out there, all right, but there wasn't a vaporator in sight. I found maps of your outpost on the computer, and a dead Quarren. I didn't have time to call in -- who would I call, anyway? -- so I went to the outpost to check it out.

LS: You shouldn't have gone alone. Giel was an Imperial admiral. He almost killed my -- an important Rebel.

DA: I hoped you'd show up and get nosy. Have you caught him yet?



LS: He's *alive*?

DA: You didn't know? I saw a ship, that'd be the Quarren's, I guess, hit escape velocity before I started to feel pretty sure I was going to die.

LS: About that --

DA: I'm fine, Luke. Really. But Giel's gone. He killed his partner, almost killed me, and killed some of his killer Tirrith. Like I told you, I went to check in at the outpost. They'd always been good neighbors. All I saw was . . . um . . .

LS: I know.

DA: There was only one place that Giel and Malak --

LS: Malka.

DA: -- Malka could be headed: our starport. It's the only one on the planet with facilities for anything bigger than a Z-95, and if they were doing what I thought they were doing, they'd need to steal a ship. I caught up with them pretty much where you found me.

LS: I found bike parts in the wreckage, too.

DA: Yep, that was mine. I really liked that bike. They were in Berl Matoone's old cargo hauler, driving as boldly as you please right through the middle of town. I cut them off with my bike, and they must not have thought I was on to them yet because they stopped. I left my bike idling and went up to the driver's seat. The little guy was eyeing me funny, but the other one, Giel, just smiled. While Malka was trying to come up with something, he bolted.

Now, I expected him to head for the starport. That's where they'd been headed, and it was the only way for him to get away at that point. Malka headed out the far side after Giel just as my blaster cleared its holster, but by then I couldn't get a shot. I ran around front to cut off their path to the ship.

Thing is, they weren't there. They'd gone back to the rear of the hauler and opened the cargo section. That's when I saw the Tirrith. They were sitting in these things that looked like miniatures of the cage Longspar used to hold them.

LS: I remember. Malka described them in his journal.

DA: The Tirrith inside -- they *pulsed* with red light. They didn't look like any Tirrith I'd ever seen. They felt . . . angry. I had my blaster out, but the tanks blocked my shot. I couldn't risk destroying the Tirrith or letting them out. If they've changed for some reason, we need to know how.

LS: I can put you at ease there. Malka wrote that these were special. Bred and tortured until they could kill.

DA: And Giel controlled them the same way Longspar had: by keeping most of them imprisoned while the rest did his dirty work.

Giel and Malka had the tanks off the cargo hauler by the time I got around to the rear. Malka raised his hands right away, and then Giel caught me off guard again. He shoved Malka into the path of my blaster, and I'm afraid I fired.

LS: Natural response. Friend of mine did the same thing once. It's Giel's fault.

DA: I know, but it still surprised me, and it shouldn't have. So Malka's falling toward me, shot and shouting, and meanwhile Giel is pulling one of the Tirrith tanks along with him, heading for the starport. Once the blaster shot went off, the folks left on the street that evening headed indoors. This town, I swear . . .

Giel must have decided to cut his losses, I guess. I set after him, but didn't get too far from the hauler before I saw him pull some kind of remote from his belt. Whatever it was, he hit a button and the Tirrith tank next to the hauler exploded, which made the hauler blow up too. After that, I don't remember much else -- just a quick flight and a

short stop, that ship heading away, and then you. Thanks, Luke. Doc says I wouldn't be here if not for you.

LS: I wasn't in time to stop Giel from getting away with the Tirrith, and almost blowing you up. I don't think it was a bomb. I think he just cut loose with the kill system. The file I found made it sound extremely dangerous. And now he's loose.

DA: He's loose, but you'll find him. The Quarren's ship was overdue on docking fees, so I had Lorrn put an impoundment transmitter on it. The frequency's in his droid's memory.

LS: And I thought you were a simple farmer. What about the rest of the Tirrith, though? Where are they?

DA: I don't know. They hadn't exactly been chumming around with us lately, anyway. I wouldn't blame them if they never made contact with us again, after what Giel did.

LS: Maybe, maybe not. I need to get the transmitter frequency back to Coruscant, which I can do from my X-wing with Artoo's help. Then, together, I think we might be able to get in touch with the Tirrith. If you'll help me.

DA: Maybe you can get in touch with them, but you're a Jedi. You can do things --

LS: Don't underestimate yourself. Trust me. By the way, any hunches about where I could find spare parts for a T-65?

Gamemaster Notes

Mutant Tirrith and Giel's Restraint Cage

Mils Giel's hired biologist, the late Quarren doctor Kimp Minmirn, went through several generations of captive Tirrith before mutations spawned the ability to alter a standard atmosphere and produce true, deadly toxins instead of mere knockout gas. Once that ability spread telepathically to the rest of the concentrated hive, Giel trained them using cruel methods. These Tirrith learned to condense the air around an individual's skin with such a thick concoction of poison that the victim's own aspirating pores killed him within seconds. Those seconds, it is believed, are extraordinarily painful.

Giel possessed two identical, astromech-sized tanks that float on repulsors and are filled with two parts of a single Tirrith super-hive derived from Minmirn's experiments. Each one can be moved at normal speed by a single character using both hands. Only a hidden switch (DC 30 Search check) or Giel's personal remote trigger can activate the kill system, which takes 2 rounds to charge. During this time, a successful Disable Device check against DC 30 can turn off both gas and electricity, but at the end of the second round, the poison reaches lethal doses as raw electricity suffuses the hive, causing instantaneous combustion. That much energy trapped in the sturdy cage turns the Tirrith cage into a concentrated explosive that inflicts 6d6 points of wound damage to all adjacent characters (DC 20 Reflex save reduces the damage by half) and 3d6 points of damage (DC 18 Reflex save negates fully) to nonadjacent characters up to 6 meters away.

As gaseous beings of energy mist, Tirrith have no Strength score, but the large number of individuals in the remaining cage augments other attributes. This particular hive is unique in the known galaxy and confined to Giel's tank, but could theoretically spread its deadly mutation among Beheboth's Tirrith population if allowed to roam free on the planet. Only a hermetic seal can keep the noncorporeal Tirrith contained.

Note that only one of the tanks survived, and is currently missing along with former Imperial admiral Mils Giel. General Cracken might assign Rebel heroes to hunt Giel down, while those with darker ambitions may wish to team up with the former admiral or take the mutant Tirrith for themselves.

For more on the Tirrith (including stats for the ordinary varieties), check out *Star Wars Gamer #7*.

Giel's Mutant Tirrith Hive: (approximately 100 Tirrith): Init +26 (Dex); Defense 36 (+36 Dex, modify according to current size); Spd 10 m; VP/WP -/416; Atk +26 ranged (special, poisonous gas, modify attack bonus according to current size); SQ Molecular healing, mind scream, mutant empathy, noncorporeal, poisonous gas, telepathy; SV Fort +73, Ref +26, Will +26; SZ M-G; FP 5; DSP 6; Rep +0; Str -, Dex 62, Con 156, Int 62, Wis 62, Cha 36; Challenge Code I.

Skills: Knowledge (Beheboth) +29, Knowledge (chemistry) +27.

Feats: None.

Special Qualities: Molecular Healing -- Giel's mutant Tirrith hive recovers 10 wound points per hour, with or without what solid beings call "rest."

Mind Scream -- As a full-round action, Giel's mutant Tirrith can "scream" inside a Force-sensitive character's mind. The character need only be in the same star system, and unless the target beats a DC 44 Will save, he or she falls unconscious for 2d4 rounds. The mutant Tirrith hive can use this ability twice per day.

Mutant Empathy -- Injuries suffered by Tirrith separated from the mutant hive cause severe pain to the rest, no matter how distant they are from the others. Each point of damage the "orphaned" Tirrith take also are suffered by the others, though this type of empathic damage cannot cause the "parent" hive's collective wound points to fall below 1.

Poisonous Gas -- Giel's mutant Tirrith can reconstitute a standard atmosphere to target an area centered on the hive and ranging from 4 to 16 square meters with a deadly poison. The potency depends on the hive's density and current size. They may target 4 square meters while at Medium size, 8 at Large size, 12 at Huge size, and 16 at Gargantuan size. Anyone whose skin is exposed to the poison must make an immediate Fortitude save against a DC equal to 30 minus the number of square meters covered. A failed save deals 4d6 points of Constitution damage to the victim, and another save against the same DC follows 2 rounds later if the victim is still alive and still in an affected square. The poison dissipates to safe levels after 3 rounds unless the Tirrith continue to take full-round actions to maintain it (this requires no additional attack roll). The Tirrith can maintain this effect for 10 consecutive rounds.

Telepathy -- Giel's mutant Tirrith can communicate telepathically with any beings within 20 meters, though they rarely choose to do so. Anyone wanting to avoid communication initiated by the Tirrith must make a DC 44 Will save. The hive can continue to attempt contact as long as the target is within range.

